

REMARKS

This is a preliminary amendment before the first Office Action.

Claims 1-32 and 44-55 are pending herein.

Claims 33-43 have been cancelled since their subject matter is claimed in co-pending parent application 09/820,540.

Claims 44-55 are added herein.

Analogous to the parent application, claims 1-32 are amended to substitute appropriate language for the phrases "cooperates with" and "polymer components." Note that the phrases "at least one" and "one or more" have been removed from the claims in several instances, because these terms are redundant in view of the associated "comprising" terminology that is present in the claims.

Support for new claims 44-55 can be found, for example, in Fig. 5 of the specification, as well as in paragraphs [0029], [0030] and [0047], and in claims 24-30.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits Claims 1-32 and 44-55 are in condition for allowance, early notification of which is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the view that an interview would expedite consideration of this Amendment or of the application at large, request is made that the Examiner telephone the Applicant's attorney at (703) 433-0510 in order that any outstanding issues be resolved.

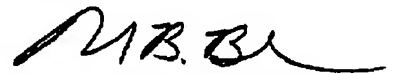
FEES

If there are any fees due and owing in respect to this amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge such fees to deposit account number 50-1047.

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Respectfully submitted,



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